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Letter dated 17 March 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit the attached letter, dated 9 March 2015, from the President of Haiti, Michel Joseph Martelly, in which he refers to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and which he invites me to share with the Security Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

I have the honour to bring to your attention the current efforts of the Government of Haiti to prepare for the forthcoming municipal, legislative and presidential elections. The holding of those elections this year is a crucial stage in the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and the promotion of development in Haiti.

The legal framework and administrative structures necessary for the conduct of the elections are being put into place as planned. The Provisional Electoral Council is already fully operational. The electoral decree that it drafted was officially published on 2 March 2015, following extensive discussions with all political stakeholders. Immediately afterwards, I launched consultations with all interested parties with a view to the establishment by the Electoral Council of a realistic electoral calendar that reflects the general consensus, while taking into account the deadlines stipulated in the Constitution. The process is generally agreed to be on track.

As you know, the establishment of an optimal security environment is essential to voters' confidence in the process and ultimately to the success of the elections.

In that regard, the Haitian Government attaches particular importance to the extremely constructive role played by the United Nations in the country in recent years and to the assistance provided to the Haitian authorities, particularly in the context of the mandate of MINUSTAH, with a view to ensuring the consolidation of the stable and secure environment needed for the smooth conduct of the elections.

At this critical juncture, however, as the electoral process enters its decisive phase, we are witnessing a worrying rise in violence, characterized in particular by renewed clashes among armed groups in certain low-income neighbourhoods, a perceptible increase in crime characterized by attacks on individuals, including policemen on duty, and frequent disturbances at demonstrations organized by radical opposition groups that are generally hostile to the holding of elections. Regrettably, such demonstrations often go hand in hand with the destruction of public property and facilities.

The Haitian Government therefore attaches the utmost importance to the maintenance of substantial United Nations assistance for the consolidation of security throughout the electoral cycle, in particular through the visible, robust presence of the military and police components of MINUSTAH, which, by more proactively supporting the initiatives of the National Police of Haiti, would make a most valuable contribution to the success of the next elections.

I should therefore like to request in particular that the United Nations suspend the current withdrawal of the MINUSTAH contingents. The Haitian Government would also very much appreciate the strengthening of the Mission's police component and its presence on the ground, as part of an increase in support to the National Police and more sustained participation in daily tasks related to security and the protection of citizens.

Lastly, I believe that it would be useful, in view of the context and the circumstances set out above, for us to jointly re-evaluate the arrangements for implementing the two-step drawdown plan mentioned in your August 2014 report to the Security Council (S/2014/617), in order to take into account changes in the situation on the ground during and after the electoral cycle.

The priority of my Government is to work unhindered towards the holding of inclusive elections under the best possible conditions of security, transparency and fairness, without which it is not possible to ensure the credibility and legitimacy that are indispensable to such elections.

It goes without saying that the present request in no way calls into question the legitimacy or the spirit of Security Council resolution 2180 (2014). In that regard, and with a view to the normalization of the situation in Haiti, as I announced in my statement during the general debate at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly in September 2014, I should like to formally reiterate my desire for a gradual and orderly withdrawal of MINUSTAH after the inauguration of the next elected president at the start of 2016.

Naturally, my Government is ready to work jointly with the office of your Special Representative in Haiti, whose work I should like to take this opportunity to commend, on the various possibilities and scenarios for the drawdown plan, which must enable the consolidation of the progress and achievements of MINUSTAH in the country.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to you in advance for considering this letter and for any action you might take in response, and to convey to you the renewed assurances of my highest consideration. I should also like to invite you to share the present letter with the President and members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Michel Joseph **Martelly**